

Run again for press —

ADDRESS OF STROM THURMOND DELIVERED AT SENECA, OCT. 23, 1954 at 3:00 P. M.

We are approaching the end of one of the most unusual campaigns ever waged in South Carolina -- a campaign to protect the right of the people to vote.

Blood was spilled on a thousand battlefields to give the individual the right to choose in free elections those who make laws and those who govern.

In our own country we have seen political machines and political bosses grow so strong that by one means or another they have succeeded in controlling elections and in denying the people their right of free suffrage. In the end, these would-be political masters passed into oblivion and the people continued supreme.

South Carolina, perhaps more than any State in the nation, has been free of machine rule and domination of elections by ring politicians. Our forefathers jealously guarded their right of suffrage and political independence. They resented and repudiated any attempt from without or within to thwart their will at the ballot box.

Not in the memory of any living South Carolinian has any group of politicians attempted to by-pass the people and have 31 men elect a United States Senator. In a one party state such as South Carolina, a Democratic primary nomination is equivalent to election. When a majority of the state committee refused to give the people a primary and gave the senatorial nomination to one of its members, it was a brazen attempt to rob the Democrats of this State of their right to vote. If a precedent is set for a committee nomination for the Senate, other committees in future years may try to name candidates for other offices without giving the people the right to vote.

The scheme to defeat the resolution calling for a primary was engineered by a small clique of professional politicians. It was ring rule in action. Since this unworthy deed on September 3, those who attempted to seize a United States Senatorship have tried to justify their undemocratic action in every way possible.

At first they said the law required the committee to certify a Democratic nominee for the Senate before midnight, September 3, the day of Senator Maybank's funeral. The committee did not have to certify a candidate. The nominee of the June primary for Senator was dead, and the committee had the clear legal right to order a primary. Certification on September 3 was not mandatory. That was used only as an excuse to get the name of one man and one man alone printed on the general election ballot for United States Senate. That one man will learn November 2 that the people are stronger than the Committee, and the people will not be denied their right to vote.

After the certification story was exploded, the committee candidate and his associates undertook to sell the people on the idea there was not time to hold a primary between September 3 and November 2. This did not fool the people either because anyone familiar with the mechanics of holding a primary knew two months was ample time. In 1944, Congressman Hamp Fulmer died only 19 days before the general election. A primary was held and his successor nominated and elected.

Still struggling for an explanation which would lessen the sting of public resentment against 31 men nominating him for the Senate, the committee candidate said the people had to be denied a primary because it would cost \$50,000. This is just more talk in a futile effort of the committee nominee to justify his committee nomination. Everybody knows our Democratic party is not so bankrupt it cannot hold a primary.

There are some things in life which cannot be measured in terms of money, and one of those is the precious right to vote. I am told a primary would not cost as much as \$15,000. But that is beside the point. Regardless of what it cost, the Democrats of South Carolina had the right to nominate the man who is to serve them in the Senate for the next six years.

My opponent said--even before the Committee met--that if a primary were held, it would be controlled by "off-brand" Democrats. That shows clearly how much he trusted the people and it shows how much he wanted a primary. But all his excuses will not deceive the people of S. Carolina.

The committee candidate says he is not a rich man, and he could not have afforded to run in a primary. That sounds strange indeed, falling from his lips. He was a candidate in two primaries for the Senate. He opposed the late Senator Ellison D. Smith and Senator Olin D. Johnston for the Senate. He failed to secure the nomination, but he never claimed he was rejected by the people because Senator Smith and Senator Johnston were rich and he was poor.

In a further effort to justify the rejection of a primary and his nomination by 31 men, the committee candidate says what the committee did was legal, and, therefore, since it was legal it was not wrong.

This is indeed a new philosophy. We all know some of the greatest wrongs of all mankind were committed within the law of man but violated the law of God and decency. It was legal to hold a primary, ~~and~~ it was morally wrong to deny you the right to vote in a primary. The people in the general elction have the power on November 2

to condemn the committee action in denying them a primary. That is the issue upon which we have waged this campaign.

The right of the people to vote is the principle for which we are fighting. I have refused to indulge in personalities in this campaign and shall continue to do so. However, when the committee candidate makes false statements about me as he did in Spartanburg when he said that I sought to secure nomination by the committee, I will answer him. I stated to several persons before the Committee met that I would not accept nomination by the committee. I wanted the people to name their Senator in a primary. I refused to permit my name to be presented to the committee. ^{only a scheming politician} ~~No real Democrat~~ would have lobbied the committee for a six-year term for Senator - as was done in this case - and deprive the people of the right to vote.

My first promise to you is that, if elected, I shall resign in 1956 in order to permit the people to have a democratic primary which they were denied this year. This makes the issue crystal clear as to what we are fighting for in this campaign.

The law provides that a primary be held in 1956. By electing me November 2, the people will be assured of a primary in 1956. Then they can nominate and elect the Senator who will serve the remaining four years of Senator Maybank's term. I will be a candidate in that primary, and it will be open to any other Democrat, including Mr. Brown from Barnwell.

He does not want to run in a primary now or in 1956. He is afraid of primaries ^{because} ~~which~~ he cannot control ^{them}. He is asking that he be elected for a six-year term and thereby deny the people a ~~primary~~ primary for one seat in the Senate until 1960.

My opponent tells the Democrats of South Carolina they must ratify his committee nomination to the Senate in the general election, or they will not be loyal to the party.

~~13~~
No Democrat is under any obligation to support the committee candidate. My opponent has not been voted on by the people. He is not the nominee of a Democratic primary. The people only take an oath to support the nominee of a primary. When my opponent refused to permit the Democrats of South Carolina to have a primary, he prevented the people from choosing their nominee to whom they would have been bound by oath.

Let there be no mistake about one thing -- a vote for the committee candidate is a vote to approve the Democrats ^{of this State} being denied a primary, and to send to the Senate for six years a Senator nominated not by the people but by 31 men.

Many wrongs have been committed in the name of party loyalty, but none will compare with a candidate asking the Democrats to be loyal to a committee action which took from them their democratic right to have a primary and the right to vote for the candidate of their choice. The people do not approve such trickery. They will go to the polls on November 2 and repudiate the un-Democratic and un-American action of the committee.

Because I am leading this fight for the right of the people to vote my democracy is being challenged. But my opponent has never ^{that} denied ^{he} voted for me in 1948. Was he any more loyal to the Truman Democrats when he voted for me than I was when I ran against Harry Truman?

I have fought the battles of South Carolina democracy at home and away from home. I know the difference between South Carolina democracy and Truman democracy. Mr. Truman, Mr. Mitchell, General Vaughan and some other "Democrats" of that kind have publicly stated they are supporting the committee candidate.

Some of that crowd have even sent money down here to influence

~~1-5-52~~
this election, but the committee candidate is welcome to their support and their money. I am depending on the support of South Carolina Democrats. These outsiders who are backing the committee candidate may think the Democrats of South Carolina are too dumb to think and too illiterate to write, but they will have a sad awakening on the morning of November 2.

I want to repeat that I shall vote with the Democrats in the organization of the United States Senate, and in the Senate I shall fight for the principles of the Democratic party of South Carolina. It was Truman who first had two attorney-generals of the United States ^{To} ask the Supreme Court to end segregation in our public schools. I would never approve such action ~~either~~ by a Democratic President or a Republican. I could not face you as a loyal South Carolina Democrat if I did. I shall never be a rubber stamp Senator and blindly follow the Mitchells, the Humphries, the Trumans and the Vaughans, when I know they are advocating things detrimental to the people of South Carolina.

Senator Maybank was not a rubber-stamp for any administration, and he made South Carolina a distinguished Senator. The committee candidate holds his present job as South Carolina national committee-man because Senator Maybank resigned after the 1952 convention. *Sen. Maybank* ~~He~~ said he could not in good conscience serve the national Democratic party in that capacity because of its policies.

Senator Maybank's forthright stand in following his convictions and resigning as national committeeman in 1952 cost him no committee assignments. It did not reduce his prestige as South Carolina's Senator.

The Committee candidate claims he was such a friend of Senator Maybank, but in 1941 while Maybank was Governor, Mr. Brown charged that Maybank was "trying to avoid" a Democratic primary to succeed Justice ^{appointed} Byrnes, who had been ~~elected~~ to the Supreme Court. The COLUMBIA STATE newspaper of July 11, 1941 carried an account of Mr. Brown's remarks, which were as follows: "It is perfectly apparent from the governor's announcement," Brown said, "that the governor wants to run himself; that he knows he can't be elected in a primary, which he is trying to avoid, and has hurriedly called a general election in which - it is my guess - he will himself run and use high pressure methods to overcome what would otherwise be ^a repudiation by the State Democratic party of the governor's high-handed method of doing things!"

The Committee candidate, Mr. Brown, has insinuated that I am not a good Democrat. He has charged that I did not support Truman and the National Party in 1948. That is true, and neither did he. ~~He~~ was the nominee of the South Carolina Democratic Party for President that year, and in an article that appears in the NEWS AND COURIER of Charleston on October 17, 1952, Mr. Brown made this statement: "We voted for Thurmond and Wright four years ago because they were the candidates of the Democratic Party of South Carolina, and because they were the best Democrats in the race."

I shall be a Democratic senator in every sense of the term. I will serve the people of South Carolina in the Senate in the manner and with the dignity to which they are entitled to be served. I have always supported the Democratic Party of South Carolina, and believe in the principles for which it stands.

In conclusion, I want to urge every Democrat to familiarize himself with the write-in ballot which we must vote when we go to the polls on November 2. Because of the committee action, the name of only one candidate for the Senate will appear on the ballot handed to you at the polls. You must mark it with care.

Sample ballots will be printed in the newspapers and distributed. Take one of these to the polls with you. You can then be sure to vote the Democratic ticket for all primary nominees and vote for me as your Democratic write-in for the Senate.

You must use this General Election to preserve our Democratic Primaries. Go to your voting place on November 2 and condemn the action of the Committee by writing in the name of Strom Thurmond for the U. S. Senate.